

Faith United Against Tobacco



June 7, 2007

SAMPLE OF LETTER SENT TO ENTIRE KANSAS DELEGATION

Dear XXX,

On behalf of faith leaders in Kansas, we are writing to you to strongly urge you to cosponsor S.625, The Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act. This legislation would grant the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) authority to regulate tobacco products. Representatives Henry Waxman (D-CA) and Tom Davis (R-VA) have introduced this legislation; more than 170 Representatives have joined the growing list of co-sponsors, while in the Senate, Senators Edward Kennedy (D-MA) and John Cornyn (R-TX) have gathered 48 of their colleagues to cosponsor the bill.

The need for action and the benefits of this specific legislation were validated by a May 24 report from the Institute of Medicine endorsing the approach of H.R.1108, saying that only by allowing federal regulation of tobacco products and strict limitations on tobacco marketing can the U.S. have a major impact on reducing the toll of tobacco.

Tobacco use remains the leading cause of preventable death in the United States, killing over 400,000 Americans every year, yet tobacco products are not regulated by the federal government. We believe that it is time for Congress to address this moral issue and enact strong legislation supported by the public health community to give the FDA the authority to regulate tobacco products.

Until Congress grants the FDA this authority, the tobacco companies will continue to market their deadly products to children. Moreover, the evidence keeps mounting about the tobacco industry's misdeeds and the harm caused by this unregulated product. On August 17, 2006, U.S. District Judge Gladys Kessler found the major tobacco companies to be racketeers who have lied – and continue to lie – to the American people about the health risks of their products and their marketing to children. On the heels of this court decision, a report by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health found that tobacco companies secretly and significantly increased the levels of nicotine in cigarette smoke between 1998 and 2004.

The faith community spends too much time burying mothers, fathers, sisters, and brothers who die because they became addicted to tobacco products when they were young. Unless Congress grants the FDA the authority to regulate tobacco products, the tobacco companies will continue to mislead consumers and discourage smokers from quitting by making unproven claims that some tobacco products are safer than others. And they will continue to hide the truth about the dangers of their products and fail to take even the most minimal steps to reduce the number of Americans who die from tobacco use.

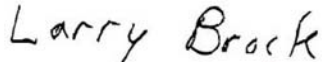
Our commitment goes beyond signing our names to this letter. We are asking our congregations to support this effort and to communicate the importance of this piece of legislation to their elected officials.

It is our sincere hope that you will cosponsor S.625. If you have any questions or would like to reply to this request, please contact Vincent DeMarco, Coordinator for Faith United Against Tobacco at 410-591-9162 or demarco@mdinitiative.org

Sincerely,



Rev. Gary Beach
Director of Connectional Ministries
Kansas East Conference, The United Methodist Church
Topeka, KS



Rev. Larry Brock
Longford-Mizpah United Methodist Church
Longford, KS



Rev. Charles R. Claycomb, Associate Pastor
East Heights United Methodist Church
Wichita, KS



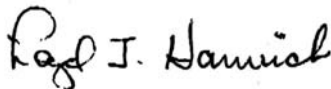
Rev. Dorothy Nickel Friesen, Conference Minister
Western District Conference, Mennonite Church USA
North Newton, KS



Nancy Gammill, President
Kansas Ecumenical Ministries Governing Board
Emporia, KS

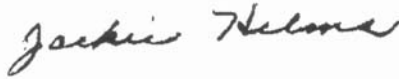


Rev. David Hansen, Conference Minister
Kansas Oklahoma Conference, United Church of Christ
Wichita, KS



Loyd Hamrick, President

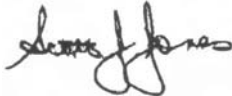
United Methodist Men, Kansas West Conference
Wichita, KS



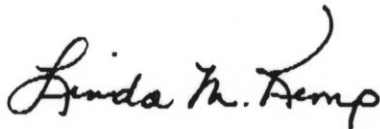
Jackie Helms, President
Church Women United of Kansas
Olathe, KS



Betty Hodson, President
United Methodist Women, Kansas West Conference
Wichita, KS



Bishop Scott J. Jones
Kansas Area, The United Methodist Church
Wichita, KS



Rev. Linda Kemp
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Topeka, KS



Rev. Lee Lever, Associate Conference Minister
Western District Conference, Mennonite Church USA
Secretary, Kansas Ecumenical Ministries Governing Board
Moundridge, KS



Rabbi Mark H. Levin, D.H.L.
Overland Park, Kansas



Rev. Aaron Madondo, Church and Society Chair,
Kansas West Conference, United Methodist Church
Hill City, KS

Bishop Gerald Mansholt
Central States Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Shawnee, KS

Kim Moore, President
United Methodist Health Ministry Fund
Hutchinson, KS

Rabbi Arthur P. Nemitoff
Overland Park, Kansas

The Rev. Dr. Cathy Northrup, Pastor,
First Presbyterian Church,
Wichita, Kansas

Rev. Shawn Flory Replogle,
Pastor, McPherson Church of the Brethren
McPherson, Kansas

Barbara Scott, President
United Methodist Women, Kansas East Conference
Tecumseh, KS

Rev. Philip Shull
University United Methodist Church
Wichita, Kansas

Rev. Jack Stone, General Secretary / Headquarters Operations Officer
Church of the Nazarene

Kansas City, MO

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "JoVeta Wescott".

JoVeta Wescott, RN,
MSHA Executive Director, Kansas Parish Nurse Ministry
Wichita, KS

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John L. Williams" with a small circular mark at the end.

Rev. John L. Williams, Executive
Synod of Mid-America, Presbyterian Church (USA)